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Moscow, January 13, 1961.

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OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Copies to: Charge d'Affaires, Canadian Embassy, Moscow.

Chief, European Division, I.T.R.B., OTTAWA.

Meetings with Mr. Pankovski, State Scientific  
and Technical Committee

1. Dr. Harrison, Canadian Department of Mines and Technical Surveys, mentioned to the Charge d'Affaires that Mr. Pankovski, of the State Scientific and Technical Committee wished to meet me. Mr. Pankovski replaced Mr. Farmokovsky in mid-November as the "Expert" liaison officer dealing with Canada on matters of exchange of technical missions. As this is our only direct entry and principal contact with this Committee, I was interested to make Mr. Pankovski's acquaintance and arranged that he and Dr. Harrison come to my hotel after work on Monday, January 10. 9 - ACK
2. The conversation was quite a general one, ranging over the field of interests between the Committee and Canada and each of our types of work, during which Mr. Pankovski mentioned that for two years (I believe 1956-1958) he had been Assistant and then Military Attache in Turkey, and had been demobilized some eight months ago.
3. On behalf of Mr. Wheeler, President of Ontario Building Materials Ltd., who visited the Soviet Union in 1960, I had officially requested a publication. Mr. Pankovski gave me this publication, at the same time asking that I pass a letter he handed me to a person in the American Embassy. I took the letter thinking it was some innocuous personal note arising out of acquaintance in Turkey, and that the name of the person would be on it.
4. Our meeting was short as Dr. Harrison and Mr. Pankovski had a dinner engagement, and, at Mr. Pankovski's suggestion, arranged that he would come to my hotel for a drink after work on Wednesday, January 11.
5. When I looked at the letter received from Mr. Pankovski it turned out to be a bulky envelope, doubly sealed with tape and without the name of the addressee. I decided to return the envelope to Mr. Pankovski at first opportunity with the explanation that I was in no position to pass over unknown contents to unidentified Americans.
6. On Wednesday at 7 P.M. Mr. Pankovski dropped in and I offered him a drink and a chair, he taking the former, but declining the latter as it faced onto the door, and instead asked if he might sit on a divan on the opposite side of the room. I happened to have the record player on, and in view of this start of proceedings kept it on during Mr. Pankovski's stay.
7. I started the conversation on topics of our mutual interests vis-a-vis the State Scientific and Technical Committee. Mr. Pankovski almost immediately asked whether I had delivered the letter, to which I replied that I had not since I was in no position to deliver unknown contents on behalf of Soviet citizens. He took the letter.

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8. Mr. Pankovski appeared somewhat agitated upon first entrance and never seemed to regain full composure. I tried to cut the trend of conversation and discuss only those matters which came strictly within the realm of his normal liaison function on behalf of the State Scientific and Technical Committee. This was to no avail and Mr. Pankovski persistently reverted to the theme of the importance for him to meet with someone from the U.S. Embassy. I prompted none of his subsequent conversation and throughout tried to emphasize the importance to my position on commercial matters of developing normal relations with the State Scientific and Technical Committee.

9. He said that although he could perhaps understand my action in not undertaking to be a go-between with the Americans, his fate was now in my hands - he hoped I would not inform anyone, (presumably the Soviets). He said he had been trying desperately the last six months to find some way of approaching the Americans, and thought that with his present position in the State Scientific and Technical Committee, Canadian officials would make this possible. He offered to show me the contents of the original letter, which I declined, and said that additional to a document on ballistic missiles, it contained his personal letters to each of President Eisenhower and President-elect Kennedy. He said he had hoped to pass on more documents, thereupon taking out of his pocket a large thickly packed envelope.

10. His determination remained, he said, to contact the Americans to whom he wanted to pass valuable information and that a final objective was to get out of the Soviet Union with his wife and daughter. Almost in passing he mentioned that he was experiencing financial problems.

11. Again he asked that I arrange for him to meet someone from the U.S. Embassy, either through an invitation to the Canadian Embassy, or a luncheon invitation, and if neither of these, that at least I inform the Americans of his interest. He explained his inability to go directly to the U.S. Embassy because of the Soviet police guards, and that even at the State Scientific and Technical Committee it was an almost invariable rule that two Soviets must be present when a foreigner calls. He offered me his home phone number, which I expressed myself willing to have, but suggesting that I would be able to reach him at his office.

12. I declined everything resulting from this one-sided gushing flow, mentioning only that I would hope to be in touch with him at the State Scientific and Technical Committee on our continuing commercial interests. I invited him to stay for dinner but he said he just didn't feel up to it and so ended our 40 minute conversation in English.

13. I am somewhat at a loss to assess the motivations behind these meetings. Mr. Pankovski is about 47, has a pleasant personality and would appear to have reasonable capacity. The rush of events in our brief meetings certainly instilled me with deepest caution. He apparently is the type that has little hesitancy to ask for personal favours as evidenced by his requests to Dr. Harrison for various items from Canada such as salve for amnesia, etc., which he assumes Dr. Harrison will send to the Embassy to be passed over. He certainly went into un-called for detail in our conversations in commenting on matters such as having the record player on, the hazards of phoning his office, repeating that his fate was in my hands, specifically mentioning documents and letters, expressing his regret that apparently I was not quite convinced of his sincerity of purpose in wishing to contact the U.S. Embassy, etc; a partial explanation might be the melodramatic of his previous position as military attache.

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14. Very obviously his position with the State Scientific and Technical Committee is a minor one, with low salary, and a great come-down from his military career. It is likely that he is a disgruntled citizen.

15. If he is honest in his professed desire to pass information of value to the Americans and have he and his family leave the Soviet Union, he is dangerously talkative. If these are not the motivations, association of Canadian personnel with him, except at the strictest official level, is highly undesirable.

William Van Vliet.